

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 273493

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INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 273493

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: JA

SUBJECT: ADJUSTMENT TO WESTPAC MARINE FORCES (S)

JOINT STATE/DEFENSE MESSAGE

1. WE WILL BE MAKING SOME MINOR ADJUSTMENTS TO MARINE ELEMENTS IN JAPAN (INCLUDING OKINAWA) THIS FALL. THE PRINCIPAL CHANGES INCLUDE: (A) VMA-513 (14 AV-8 HARRIERS) WILL RETURN FROM IWAKUNI TO U.S. WEST COAST. IN ITS STEAD A SIX-PLANE HARRIER ROTATING DETACHMENT FROM THE U.S. WILL BE DEPLOYED IN THE PACIFIC CONTINUOUSLY TO MEET WESTPAC

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 273493

AV-8 COMMITMENTS. (B) VMO-6 -- THE OV-10 SQUADRON AT

FUTEMA MCAS OKINAWA WILL BE DECOMMISSIONED. WESTPAC OV-10 REQUIREMENTS WILL BE MET BY A ROTATING SIX-PLANE DETACHMENT DEPLOYED FROM THE U.S. (C) THESE ADJUSTMENTS WILL RESULT IN A REDUCTION OF APPROXIMATELY 200 PERSONNEL IN III MAF. (D) ONE RIFLE COMPANY FROM EACH OF THE SIX INFANTRY BATTALIONS OF THE 3RD MARINE DIVISION WILL BE GRADUALLY CADRED, WITH A REDUCTION OVER TIME OF APPROXIMATELY 800 PERSONNEL IN III MF. WE ARE, HOWEVER, INCREASING FIREPOWER OF THE DIVISION BY ADDING 60MM MORTAR AND REDEYE UNITS. ALL PERSONNEL INCLUDING REDUCTIONS WILL REMAIN UNDER CONTROL OF PACOM.

2. THESE ADJUSTMENTS ARE SMALL AND NORMALLY WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH GOJ. HOWEVER, IN THE SPIRIT OF INCREASED COOPERATION WE WISH TO DISCUSS THESE ADJUSTMENTS WITH THE GOJ IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY BE APPRISED OF ALL CURRENT ACTIVITY INVOLVING FORCES. WERE THESE SMALL ADJUSTMENTS TO GARNER UNUSUAL PUBLICITY, THEY COULD BE MISINTERPRETED AS EVIDENCE OF U.S. FORCE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PACIFIC, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE OF ON-GOING ARMY PROGRAM BUDGET DECISION (PBD 253) SUPPORT REALIGNMENTS. THUS WE DESIRE TO BRIEF GOJ ON EVEN MINOR FORCE REALIGNMENTS TO PRECLUDE MISUNDERSTANDING. REQUEST EMBASSY/COMUSJAPAN INFORM APPROPRIATE GOJ AUTHORITIES AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF THE ACTIONS IN PARAGRAPH ONE. VISIBLE USMC ACTIVITY WILL BEGIN AFTER 9 NOVEMBER.

3. THE FOLLOWING DATA MAY BE DRAWN ON AS NECESSARY IN YOUR DISCUSSION. (A) ACTIONS ARE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE GREATER BALANCE IN THE OVERALL FORCE POSTURE OF THE MARINE CORPS AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A REDUCTION OF U.S. FORCE POSTURE IN ASIA OR IN COMMITMENT TO JAPAN. (B) RETURNING IWAKUNI HARRIER SQUADRON WILL REMAIN UNDER CINCPAC OPCON AND USED TO ENHANCE THE U.S. WEST COAST MARINE AIR-GROUND TEAM WHICH CURRENTLY HAS NO HARRIERS ASSIGNED. III MAF CAN BE QUICKLY REINFORCED FROM U.S. UNITS IN THE EVENT OF A CONTINGENCY. (C) THE LIMITED NATURE OF THE ADJUSTMENTS WILL NOT RESULT IN ANY REDUCTION IN III MAF FACILITY REQUIREMENTS. AT BEST, A SMALL REDUCTION OF BADLY OVERCROWDED CONDITIONS ON IWAKUNI AND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 273493

OKINAWA WILL TAKE PLACE. (D) AS FURTHER EMPHASIS THAT THIS IS A MINOR ADJUSTMENT FOR FORCE BALANCING PURPOSES, YOU MIGHT POINT OUT THAT FOLLOWING THESE ADJUSTMENTS THERE WILL BE A NEGLIGIBLE DECREASE IN DEPLOYED AVIATION FORCES IN THE WESTERN PACIFIC SINCE IN ADDITION TO THE ROTATION AV-8 AND OV-10 DETACHMENTS, FOUR SQUADRONS OF USMC TACTICAL AIRCRAFT REMAIN AT IWAKUNI. THERE IS ALSO A USAF TACTICAL WING OF FOUR F-4 SQUADRONS ON OKINAWA AND A THREE-SQUADRON

F-4 WING IN KOREA. ADDITIONALLY, TWO AIRCRAFT CARRIERS
WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEPLOYED IN WESTPAC. KISSINGER

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